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UKRAINE HITS RUSSIAN BOMBERS AHEAD OF TRUCE TALKS IN ISTANBUL

A Ukrainian drone attack destroyed over 40 Russian planes on Sunday—a day before the two sides were to meet for talks in Istanbul

TOP UKRAINIAN COMMANDER PUTS IN PAPERS

The spectacular claim that Ukraine damaged $2 billion worth of Russian aircraft parked at airbases thousands of kilometres away came as Kyiv announced that a Russian counter-military strike killed at least 12 of its soldiers at an army training site, leading to the resignation of its ground forces commander Mykhailo Drapaty, who owed 'responsibility' for the hit

TWO RUSSIAN AIR BASES BEAR THE BRUNT

- Russia's defence ministry in a statement confirmed the attacks from Ukraine. The FPV drones damaged aircraft and sparked fires on air bases in Irkutsk as well as Russia's northern Murmansk
- Ukraine's top army chief Oleksandr Syrskyi said Russia attacked Pokrovsk, Toretsk and Lyman in Donetsk as well as Sumy | P9

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DRONES LAUNCHED BY RUSSIA ON SUNDAY IN ITS COUNTER OFFENSIVE

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

GST collections stay above ₹2 lakh cr in May

Gross GST revenue up 16.4%; robust mop-up for 2nd month in a row; double-digit growth in several large states

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

IF May GST collection—tax collected for April transactions—are anything to go by, India's economy started the financial year with a bang despite the disruptions caused by US president Donald Trump's threat of reciprocal tariffs.

Gross monthly GST collections in May rose by 16.4% to touch ₹2.01 lakh crore—only the third time since the indirect tax regime came into force in July 2017. Gross domestic revenue rose by 14% to ₹1.5 lakh crore, while revenue from imports increased by 25% to ₹51,000 crore.

Net GST revenues (after deducting refunds from gross collections) showed even better buoyancy as the same increased by 20.4% to ₹1.74 lakh crore. Total refunds contracted by 4% year-on-year.

This is the second month in a row when gross collections witnessed double-digit growth. In April, gross GST collections hit an all-time high of ₹2.36 lakh crore in April 2025, 12.6% higher than the collection of ₹2.10 lakh crore in April 2024. This augurs well for the country as FY25 showed GST revenue collections growth slowing down to single digit numbers.

"A 16% growth in GST collections in the month shows a renewed upward momentum after a few months of growth in the range of 11 to 12%. If the growth continues in this range for next couple of months, it might provide the cushion for the Government to look at rate rationalisation on which a lot of work has already been done," says Pratik Jain, partner, Price Waterhouse & Co LLP.

Meanwhile, M S Mani, partner, Deloitte India, says a 25% higher GST revenue from imports indicates that imports have accelerated despite recent tariff headwinds.

Several large states, including those in the South, have seen high double-digit growth. Collections from Maharashtra rose by 17%, Karnataka by 20%, Tamil Nadu by 25% and Kerala by 24%. Bihar (23%) and Delhi (58%) and West Bengal (18%) are few other notable good performers during the month. Gujarat (4%), Telangana (6%) and Andhra Pradesh (-2%) were few of the laggards.

According to Deloitte's Mani, the wide variations in GST collections growth across states require a thorough analysis across the sectors that are important in each state.

"The average growth across the country does not appear to be uniformly reflected across states, possibly due to sectoral or seasonal factors which require a deeper data-based analysis," he argues.

GROSS GST REVENUE

	May '24	May '25
CGST	32,409	35,434
SGST	40,265	43,902
IGST	87,781	1,08,836
CESS	12,284	12,879
Total	1,72,739	2,01,050

(Figures in ₹ crore)

Import gains

GST revenue from inward shipments grew 25%, showing imports shot up despite tariff headwinds

CAMPAIGN BUGLE

Shah raises Op Sindoor, CAA in Bengal poll pitch

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

SOUNDING the poll bugle in West Bengal ahead of the 2026 Assembly polls, Union home minister Amit Shah on Sunday accused the Mamata Banerjee-led government of opposing Operation Sindoor and the Waqf Amendment Bill to appease the Muslim vote bank.

Addressing party leaders and workers in Kolkata, Shah alleged Hindus were being oppressed in the state and forced to flee. The recent riots in Murshidabad were not spontaneous but orchestrated by the state, he claimed, adding that the Mamata-led Trinamool Congress shielded the perpetrators of violence. Shah also alleged that Hindu refugees were getting notices that their names may be removed from the voter list. "There is no need to worry. Simply fill out the CAA applications, and we will ensure that they are granted Indian citizenship," he said.

Raising the Pahalgam terror attack issue, Shah said, "When tourists from Bengal were killed in the attack, Mamata Didi remained silent. But now she is having problems with Operation Sindoor."

Mamata Banerjee had recently accused the Centre of politicising Operation Sindoor for electoral gains. "Operation Sindoor was to punish terrorists. But Didi was pained at the deaths of terrorists and gave a cheap political statement. She made West Bengal a centre for infiltrators, corruption and crimes," Shah said, adding that the TMC's days were numbered. Shah said the upcoming elections are not just about Bengal, but about national security, adding: "Didi has left Bengal's borders open for Bangladeshis. Infiltration is taking place in Bengal with her blessing."

In a counter to Shah's charges, the TMC said stopping infiltration is the responsibility of the BSF, not state government.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah addresses an organisational meeting of the BJP in Kolkata on Sunday | PTI

Hasina charged with crimes against humanity

AGENCIES @ Dhaka

FUGITIVE former Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina orchestrated a "systematic attack" that amounted to crimes against humanity in her attempt to crush the uprising that toppled her government, Bangladeshi prosecutors said at the opening of her trial on Sunday.

Up to 1,400 people were killed between July and August 2024 after Hasina's government launched its crackdown, according to the United Nations.

Hasina, 77, fled by helicopter to India as the student-led uprising ended her 15-year rule, and she has defied an extradition order to return to Dhaka.

Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) is prosecuting former senior figures connected to Hasina's ousted government and her now-banned party, the Awami League. "Upon scrutinising the evidence, we reached the conclusion that it was a coordinated, widespread and systematic attack," ICT chief prosecutor Mohammad Tajul Islam told the court in his opening speech.

Separately on Sunday, the Supreme Court restored the registration of Bangladesh's largest Islamist party, Jamaat-e-Islami, allowing it to take part in elections.

Minor gangraped in Belagavi; 2 minors among 5 held

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Belagavi

A deeply disturbing incident of six youth allegedly abducting a 15-year-old girl and subjecting her to repeated sexual assault has come to light in Belagavi. The accused, two of whom are minors, reportedly filmed the crime and used the video to blackmail the girl, continuing to exploit her over time. Though the offence took place between December 2024 and January 2025, it has come to light now.

According to the complaint filed by the girl's parents at the APMC police station, she was first taken in a car by one of the accused, who is her friend, to Windmill Hill at Muttyanatti village in December. He then introduced her to his five friends, and all of them allegedly raped her, while one of them filmed the offence.

The second time, the accused threatened her that the video would be leaked and took her to Khadi Machine Hill near Alatage in January. This time, there were three youth and all of them allegedly raped her. Both the crime sites are located in the Kakati police limits.

It is suspected that the accused might have threatened her with leaking the video and raped her more number of times.

Her prolonged trauma came to light when her parents noticed changes in her behaviour and asked her about it. They managed to catch one of the accused, a 19-year-old, and handed him over to the police. P5

PERENNIAL MISERY

Residents evacuate with their livestock after floods forced them out of their homes in Lakhimpur, Assam, on Sunday | PTI | P8

EXPRESS READ

BMTC driver suspended over bid to run over woman

Bengaluru: A Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) bus driver, who allegedly attempted to run over a woman who was arguing with him following a collision, has been suspended. Driver Prashanth has been placed under suspension pending a departmental inquiry. The incident took place on the evening of May 23 | P3

Labourer dies as earth caves in at Hutti gold mines

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kalaburagi / Raichur

A labourer died, while another was seriously injured after earth caved in inside a mining shaft at Hutti gold mines in Lingsugur taluk of Raichur district on Sunday.

Sharanabasava Amaresh Veerapur (39) died while working at a depth of 2,800 feet at Mallappa shaft. A pocket of trapped air exploded in the mine, trapping Sharanabasava under rock and soil, sources said. The other labourer, Nirupadi Kanakappa Panlmanakellur (22), who was seriously injured, was first admitted to Hutti Gold Mining Company hospital and later shifted to Belagavi.

After the incident, labourers stopped work and held a dharna in front of the company office, alleging that proper precautionary measures had not been taken.

As a large amount of ore and soil had collapsed inside the mine shaft, the company's rescue team, officials and labourers struggled to retrieve Sharanabasava's body. P5

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WUNDERKIND

At 11, B'luru's Charvi making heads turn at Norway Open

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @ Stavanger

INDIA's chess conveyor belt shows no signs of slowing down. One of the latest to emerge from the seemingly limitless pool is Charvi A, who has already made the likes of Viswanathan Anand sit up and take notice. The 11-year-old, currently in action at the Norway Open event in the city, is a WFM (Woman Fide Master).

Already an age-group world champion, what makes the Bengaluru-based Charvi special is the way she's laser-focused in her chess. Even in a game where obsessives are dime-a-dozen, it's unheard of for somebody as young as her to set boundaries. For example, she has already told her parents to not reveal the identity of her coach (she has worked with Swayams Mishra and RB Ramesh in the past).

Her dedication also lies in her wanting to learn from her mistakes. After every game, she makes it a point to have a debrief with all of her opponents. "It can go on for 30 minutes also," her mother, Akhila, who left behind her IT job, says. She and her husband Anil Kumar had to rely on YouTube to understand the game and keep pace with their daughter.

Charvi A with her parents

Her parents were undecided on her daughter pursuing chess but after she won the Under-8 girls World Championship, they were sold on her obvious talents (post that, she also got the highest civilian award given to children for her chess exploits). They were okay pulling her out of school (she only visits to give term exams) apart from customising her training schedule. Apart from chess training, she also goes for swimming and badminton classes in the evening to ensure she gets some physical activity on a daily basis.

Charvi has had a mixed Open event but that's to be expected as the players she faces are either higher rated or have more experience. But it will stand her in good stead going forward. P11